

By being peevish? I tell thee what *Antonio*,
I loue thee, and it is my loue that speaks:
There are a sort of men, whose visage
Do creame and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilfull stillnesse entertaine,
With purpose to be drest in an opinion
Of wisdom, grauity, profound conceit,
As who should say, I am fit an Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dogge barke.
O my *Antonio*, I do know of these
That therefore onely are reputed wise,
For saying nothing; when I am verie sure
If they should speake, would almost dam those eares
Which hearing them would call their brothers fooles:
He tell thee more of this another time.
But fith not with this melancholly baite
For this foole Gudge, this opinion:
Come good *Lorenzo*, faryewell a while,
He end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leaue you then till dinner time.
I must be one of these same dumbe wise men,
For *Gratiano* neuer let's me speake.

Gra. Well, keepe me company but two yeares mo,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine owne tongue.

Ant. Far you well, He grow a talker for this geare.
Gra. Thanks ifaith, for silence is onely commendable
In a neats tongue dri'd, and a maid not vendible. *Exit.*

Ant. It is that any thing now.
Bass. *Gratiano* speaks an infinite deale of nothing,
more then any man in all Venice, his reasons are two
graines of wheate hid in two bushels of chaffe: you shall
seeke all day ere you finde them, & when you haue them
they are not worth the searce.

Ant. Well: tel me now, what Lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret Pilgrimage
That you to day promis'd to tel me of?

Bass. 'Tis not unknowne to you *Antonio*
How much I haue disabled mine estate,
By something shewing a more swelling port
Then my faint meanes would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make mone to be abridg'd;
From such a noble rare, but my cheefe care
Is to come fairely off from the great debts
Wherein my time something too prodigall
Hath left me gag'd: to you *Antonio*
I owe the most in money, and in loue,
And from your loue I haue a warrantie
To vnburthen all my plots and purposes,
How to get cleere of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you good *Bassanio* let me know it,
And if it stand as you your selfe still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assur'd
My purse, my person, my extreamest meanes
Lye all vnlock'd to your occasions.

Bass. In my schoole dayes, when I had lost one shaft
I shot his fellow of the selfesame flight
The selfesame way, with more aduised watch
To finde the other forth, and by aduenturing both,
I oft found both. I vge this child-hood proofe,
Because what followes is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and like a wilfull youth,
That which I owe is lost: but if you please
To shoote another arrow that selfe way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the ayre: Or to finde both,
Or bring your latter hazard backe againe,

And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant. You know me well, and herein spend but time
To winde about my loue with circumstance,
And out of doubt you doe more wrong
In making question of my vttermoost
Then if you had made waste of all I haue:
Then doe but say to me what I should doe
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest vnto it: therefore speake.

Bass. In *Belmont* is a Lady richly left,
And she is faire, and fairer then that word,
Of wondrous vertues, sometimes from her eyes
I did receiue faire speechlesse messages:
Her name is *Portia*, nothing vnderallewd
To *Cato's* daughter, *Brutus Portia*,
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the foure windes blow in from euery coast
Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,
Which makes her seat of *Belmont* *Cholcher* strond,
And many *Iasons* come in quest of her.
O my *Antonio*, had I but the meanes
To hold a riual place with one of them,
I haue a minde prefaces me such thirst,
That I should questionlesse be fortunate.

Ant. Thou knowst that all my fortunes are at sea,
Neither haue I money, nor commodity
To raise a present summe, therefore goe forth
Try what my credit can in Venice doe,
That shall be rackt euen to the vttermoost,
To furnish thee to *Belmont* to faire *Portia*.
Goe presently enquire, and so will I
Where money is, and I no question make
To haue it of my trust, or for my sake. *Exit.*

Enter Portia with her waiting woman Nerissa.

Portia. By my troth *Nerissa*, my little body is a wea-
rie of this great world.

Ner. You would be sweet Madam, if your miseries
were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are:
and yet for ought I see, they are as sicke that suffer with
too much, as they that starue with nothing; it is no final
happinesse therefore to bee seated in the meane, super-
fluitie comes sooner by white haire, but competence
lives longer.

Portia. Good sentences, and well pronounc'd.

Ner. They would be better if well followed.

Portia. If to doe were as easie as to know what were
good to doe, Chappels had beene Churches, and poore
mens cottages Princes Pallaces: it is a good Diuine that
followes his owne instructions; I can easie teach twen-
tie what were good to be done, then be one of the twen-
tie to follow mine owne teaching: the braine may de-
uise lawes for the blood, but a hot temper leapes o're a
colde decree, such a hare is madnesse the youth, to skip
ore the meshes of good counsaile the cripple; but this
reason is not in fashion to choose me a husband: O mee,
the word choose, I may neither choose whom I would,
nor refuse whom I dislike, so is the wil of a liuing daugh-
ter curb'd by the will of a dead father: it is not hard *Ner-
rissa*, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none.

Ner. Your father was euer vertuous; and holy men
at their death haue good inspirations, therefore the lot-
teric that hee hath deuised in these three chests of gold,
siluer, and leade, whereof who chooses his meaning,
chooses

chooses you, wil no doubt neuer be chosen by any right-
ly, but one who you shall rightly loue: but what warmth
is there in your affection towards any of these Princely
suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee ouer-name them, and as thou namest
them, I will describe them, and according to my descrip-
tion leuell at my affection.

Ner. First there is the Neopolitane Prince.

Por. I that's a colt indeede, for he doth nothing but
talke of his horse, and hee makes it a great appropria-
tion to his owne good parts that he can shoo him him-
selfe: I am much afraid my Ladie his mother plaid false
with a Smyth.

Ner. Than is there the Countie Palentine.

Por. He doth nothing but frowne (as who should
say, and you will not haue me, choose: he heares merrie
tales and smiles not, I feare hee will proue the weeping
Philosopher when he growes old, being so full of vn-
mannerly sadnesse in his youth.) I had rather to be marri-
ed to a deaths head with a bone in his mouth, then to ei-
ther of these: God defend me from these two.

Ner. How say you by the French Lord, Mounfier
Le Boune?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him passe for a
man, in truth I know it is a sinne to be a mocker, but he,
why he hath a horse better then the Neopolitans, a ber-
ter bad habite of frowning then the Count Palentine, he
is euery man in no man, if a Trassell sing, he fals straight
a capring, he will fence with his own shadow. If I should
marry him, I should marry twentie husbands: if hee
would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he loue me
to madnesse, I should neuer requite him.

Ner. What say you then to *Fauconbridge*, the yong
Baron of England?

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for hee vnder-
stands not me, nor I him: he hath neither *Latine*, *French*,
nor *Italian*, and you will come into the Court & sweare
that I haue a poore pennie-worth in the *English*: hee is a
proper mans picture, but alas who can conuerse with a
dumbe show? how odly he is suited, I thinke he bought
his doublet in *Italie*, his round hose in *France*, his bonnet
in *Germanie*, and his behaviour euery where.

Ner. What thinke you of the other Lord his neigh-
bour?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charitie in him, for
he borrowed a boxe of the eare of the *Englishman*, and
swore he would pay him againe when hee was able: I
thinke the *Frenchman* became his suretie, and seald vnder
for another.

Ner. How like you the yong *Germaine*, the Duke of
Saxones Nephew?

Por. Very vildely in the morning when hee is sober,
and most vildely in the afternoone when hee is drunke:
when he is best, he is a little worse then a man, and when
he is worst, he is little better then a beast: and the worst
fall that euer fell, I hope I shall make shift to goe with-
out him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right
Casket, you should refuse to performe your Fathers will,
if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore for feare of the worst, I pray thee set
a deepe glasse of Reinish-wine on the contrary Casket,
for if the diuell be within, and that temptation without,
I know he will choose it. I will doe any thing *Nerissa*
ere I will be married to a sponge.

Ner. You neede not feare Lady the hauing any of

these Lords, they ha-
minations, which is
and to trouble you w
be won by some othe
on, depending on the

Por. If I liue to be
chaste as *Diana*: vul
of my Fathers will:
are so reasonable, fo
I doate on his verie a
parture.

Ner. Doe you m
thers time, a *Venece*
came hither in comp
ferat?

Por. Yes, yes, it w
call'd.

Ner. True Mad
foolish eyes look'd v
Lady.

Por. I remember h
thy of thy praise.

Enter

Ser. The foure Str
their leaue: and there
the Prince of *Moroco*
Maister will be here

Por. If I could b
heart as I can bid the
glad of his approach
and the complexion o
shrine me then wue
whiles wee shur the
knocks at the doore.

Enter Bassanio

Shy. Three thous

Bass. I fir, for thre

Shy. For three me

Bass. For the whi

Antonio shall be bo

Shy. *Antonio* sh

Bass. May you ste

Shy. I know your an

Shy. Three thous

and *Antonio* bound.

Bass. Your answ

Shy. *Antonio* is a

Bass. Haue you h

trary.

Shy. Ho no, no, no

good man, is to haue

ent, yet his meanes a

he bound to Tripoli

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men, there be land r

and land theeuces, I

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standing sufficient, th

take his bond.

Bass. Be assured